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R. H. Tawney

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THE HERITAGE OF THE VOLUNTEER[1]

MARY C. GOODWILLIE

Volunteer, Baltimore Family Welfare Association

WHEN I was asked to be the first speaker in this very interesting series of talks on *Volunteer Values*, I was given a subject, "The History of Social Work," which might easily have frightened me off, had I not also been told at the same time that I need not keep to the title but could feel free to choose my own subject. Now it happens that I have a subject that I want very much to talk about and one which seems to me to be equally appropriate as an introduction to this series. I shall call it "The Heritage of the Volunteer."

A good many years ago, I made a little experiment with a group of young volunteers. I read with them the biographies of some of the men and women who might be called pioneers in social work. I got the idea from hearing the doctors whom I knew talk of Dr. Osler's "Historical Society" which he had founded at the Johns Hopkins Hospital to give the medical students a knowledge of the background of medicine and some appreciation of what the men who had gone before had done to make possible present scientific advance. I would hear them talk of Sydenham, Hunter, William Harvey, Sir Thomas Browne, and occasionally I would go to a meeting myself. Then came the War with its heavy demands on time and strength, and it was not until two years ago that I returned to my idea. Meantime, I had read Dr. Harvey Cushing's *Life of Sir William Osler* and was further impressed with Osler's strong feeling that the on-coming generations must be kept aware of their heritage, must learn to build on the strong foundations of the past, and must keep brave their hearts with the stories of dauntless courage and arduous work of those who had gone before. If this was important for medical students, why not equally so for students and volunteers in social work?

We too have our pioneers, a rich background of high endeavor, unfaltering courage, and adventures in faith! And not to be aware of it is to lose perhaps the greatest inspiration for our work. To me it seemed to be a definite part of training, and I asked if I might try the experiment of teaching the history of social work by reading the lives of some of the men from St. Francis to Dr. Trudeau, and so learn of our past not in terms of movements, organizations, or foundations, but as the result of the quickening force of human lives with faith,

[1] Given at the first meeting of *Volunteer Values*, under the auspices of the Association of Volunteers in Social Service, New York, November 29, 1926.

courage, strength, and love beyond their fellow men, so that societies and legislation and sanatoria were the natural results of their efforts. We were not to be content to know about these people from text books or encyclopedias, but to know their very selves from their letters or through the people who had lived close to them, and from the best biographies that we could find. Such an adventure into the past I have made for two years now with a student group who are members of the Social Economics Department of the Johns Hopkins University. It is open to volunteers and next year we hope to have several volunteers who are now asking for admission.

The pressure upon the present generation is so almost overwhelming and the swiftly-moving currents of thought and events are so bewildering that sometimes life seems to me like one of those rather frightening inventions—a moving stairway. You get on just where you happen to be and are moved rapidly along without any effort of your own, hoping that you will arrive some place that you want to be. Where the stairway came from is quite mysteriously hidden. All you know is that it is moving and taking you with it. In this way, many people join the current of life—just where it happens to pick them up, with no sense of the source whence it rose or how it got its volume and velocity. I have known young social workers who took modern conditions of life so for granted that never in imagination did they look back at a time when there were no child labor laws, or sanatoria for the treatment of tuberculosis, to which patients could be sent as part of a case work routine. The lifelong struggle of Lord Shaftesbury, or Dr. Trudeau's cold, lonely winters in the Adirondacks were unknown to them.

Young as social work is, it has a glorious heritage, and unless the lives of professional and volunteer workers are enriched by the consciousness and knowledge of it, the future will suffer an impoverishment in its ideals. In the short time that I have to speak, I can tell you only of my experiment in bringing this heritage to a special group. I had to consider carefully the time at our disposal for reading and discussion and plan accordingly. Whenever I have talked over the idea with friends, I have found them ready with interesting suggestions and additions but I have kept in mind that it was better to carry through a smaller program than to attempt more than we could accomplish. Once given the idea, anyone can go on elaborating and enlarging it.

So, we have stepped over space and centuries in a pair of seven-league boots, picking out certain men and women whose lives were significant to us because their first interest and concern was the care of others disadvantaged in life—the sick and suffering, the poor and those who had no helper, the man lowest down, the forgotten man—St. Francis embracing the leper, Jane Addams choosing to live in the meanest part of a great, chaotic city, Vincent de Paul refusing the preferments of the Church and working in the sad spots of Paris with his Sisters of Charity.

We began with St. Francis, and yet not quite; because we felt that we must have in mind that Life of Lives which is the pattern for all time. So we read two books of Professor Francis G. Peabody, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question* and *Jesus Christ and Christian Character,* which although written twenty years ago give a point of view that seemed to me a good starting place.

To read the life of St. Francis, *The Little Flowers* and *The Mirror of Perfection,*[1] is to get a glimpse of life lived joyously as an adventure of the soul; to see Poverty as his glorious bride is to think of it not as a thing that cramps us but as something that frees us from the material bonds for the wider life of the spirit. No sensitive soul can apprehend even a little of the Franciscan spirit without a deep stirring within. He is a saint of the Catholic Church, the glory of Italy, but he is also the possession of all of us who in this latter day are working in a spirit of love for our fellow men. He is the first great volunteer, one who chose or willed to leave a life of ease, pleasure, and earthly success for one of service, toil, and self-abasement.

With one step of the seven-league boots we went from 13th Century Italy to the

[1] See also "St. Francis of Assisi," by Mary Willcox Glenn, THE FAMILY, October, 1926, page 167.

France of Louis XIII, to follow Vincent de Paul through the long, patient years of almost unbelievable toil in the dark places of a Paris preparing for the Revolution. Here is a place where the volunteer should pause and study M. Vincent's experiments with his Ladies of Charity and his Sisters of Charity. He must have gone through most of the emotions in regard to volunteers that are familiar to us: the high hopes, the discouragement when the eagerness of those who are attracted by the novelty of a new experience disappears in the face of hard work. We are glad that he had the comfort of watching the increasing bands of Sisters of Charity—those simple souls from the country who, under his inspiration and guidance, endured every discipline and hardship and sight of suffering to nurse the sick and relieve the poor.

It was a different Paris two centuries later, after the Revolution, when Frederic Ozanam gathered his group of young Catholics about him to oppose the rising tide of irreligion and atheism. His answer to the taunt of "Show us your works" was the formation of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Very like our own friendly visitors his young followers were; their conferences have a familiar sound, and the "Alms of Advice" is still a good watch-word.

But, Anglo-Saxons that we are, it is to the English group that we turn as to our own people. The first of them, that sturdy old Scotchman, Thomas Chalmers, sowed the seeds that later bore fruit in the charity organization movement. His district plan of a manageable area where his deacons (strange name for volunteers!) could know the people as neighbors know one another, is one of the basic ideas of modern social work, and I wish that every modern social worker had Chalmers' strong belief in the strength of the people and their power to help themselves.

Lord Shaftesbury's fight for the children in the mines and factories and Florence Nightingale's fight for better care of the sick [1] should give fresh courage to those working against odds for social reform through legislation. Sir John Russell's phrase about Shaftesbury, when he speaks of his "overstrained zeal for humanity," is still a familiar sneer of those who are content to leave things as they are, and should be as lightly taken in our day as it was in Shaftesbury's.

Those young men who, fresh from the influence of Jowett and Balliol College, brought the best of Oxford to the East End of London—Arnold Toynbee and Edward Denison—are the connecting link between Shaftesbury and the group that formed the Charity Organisation Society in London in the '60's.

No one can afford to miss the letters of Octavia Hill, that pattern for all volunteers, whose loving spirit knew no barriers between people, whose neighborliness was the simple, inevitable way and whose gifts were the bestowal of the things of the spirit—beauty, friendship, opportunity. The high ideals with which the Charity Organisation Society began were due to her and Denison and others of that remarkable group who founded one more society because there were already too many.

In the young barrister, Charles Loch, we come to the first full time worker, the prototype of the later professional social worker. Up to this time, all effort and experiment had been of volunteer origin; there was no sense of social work as a new profession to be classed with law or medicine. But when we see Charles Loch, at the age of twenty-six, relinquishing his chosen career of law in order to give all his time to the development of the Charity Organisation Society, we know that a definite step forward has been taken. Almost at once he began to train workers to take the positions that were demanding them and a new profession was born.[2]

So, it all began with a volunteer; and it was the intelligent volunteer looking about at the chaos of social life in big cities that called into being the trained worker. From now on we begin to see the steadily growing emphasis on the professional worker and the question is being asked, "What need is there any longer for the volunteer?" The volunteer was content to lose his life—

[1] See "The Biography of a Social Worker," by Mary E. Richmond. THE FAMILY, March and April, 1923.

[2] See also "Sir Charles Stewart Loch," by Mary E. Richmond, THE FAMILY, March and April, 1924.

only to find it again in a fuller sense in the new relationship to the professional worker; and it is on partnership or teamwork that the emphasis should be placed and not on the terms professional or volunteer, full time or part time, trained or untrained, paid or unpaid worker.

The technical skill of the trained worker needs to be enriched by the more varied experience of the volunteer, whose greater leisure for books, travel, or friendships has kindled her imagination about life and its problems. Friendships between the two should be cultivated for the sake of each. The volunteer must be content to let the professional lead the way; but she must interpret the work to an indifferent or unenlightened public; she must win support for it; she must safeguard the trained worker's strength and buoy up her flagging spirits in times of stress; she must bring a fresh mind to bear on all the problems and so get the work out of the all too easily worn ruts; and she must free the trained worker for more work by taking over all the tasks a volunteer can do. The professional, on her part, must realize how much richer her contribution will be because of this contact with volunteers, and how important for future development it is to win and hold and train them, for they are after all the permanent force for social progress, and social work in any place can never rise and be long maintained at a higher level than that of its volunteers. This, it seems to me, was the relationship with which the pioneers of the new profession began, and it is a heritage that should not be forgotten.

America took over the English ideas and ideals. Josephine Shaw Lowell belongs so much to you here in New York that I have only to speak her name to make you realize how truly fine a heritage is yours. Chicago has the same cause for gratitude to Jane Addams. Both are responsible for so much that it seems hardly human. Mrs. Lowell was the moving spirit not only in the New York Charity Organization Society but on the State Board of Charities, in better care for dependent children, feebleminded women, the insane, and girls in factories. Jane Addams created a settlement that has been an inspiration to literally hundreds, and from which has grown a better understanding of immigrant peoples, the establishment of playgrounds and other recreational opportunities, and scores of municipal reforms. Both women are types of the great volunteer and both, by their example, have persuaded many others to choose a life of service.

The development of modern social work comes on with a rush as specializations follow one another in quick succession—children's work, hospital social work, probation work, public health. With this latter great movement to reduce suffering and release men's energies, the name of Dr. Trudeau must always be associated because of what he did for the care and cure of tuberculosis. His own life was the price of his contribution. He taught people how to get well and how to be sick, how to live and how to die. One of my students, when asked to give his outstanding quality, replied "unconquerableness." I think it was truly said; all of us know people to whom he has given sustained courage in the face of adversity. It is perhaps our greatest heritage from him.

And so we come close to our own times and realize that each one of us has her own peculiar heritage, something closer and more personal than any of which I have spoken. One of my memories is going with my grandfather to a dreary, dingy spot in Cleveland known as the Bethel. It was not much, judged by present standards, but it was the germ of all the family social work now done there. The paid worker (professional is not the name for him) was well-meaning enough but not very understanding of the possibilities of his position, hard rather than reassuring, suspicious of fraud rather than sympathetic with trouble. Grandfather used to sit at the desk beside him and listen to the stories, giving a courteous attention, encouraging word, and gentle friendliness to all who came. I sat by and watched the tramps in the woodyard and listened and wondered. Without these visits I should never have come into my full heritage.

Every city has its own heritage to which it is glad to look back, and in Baltimore we have as remarkable a group as any city was ever proud of. New York has taken some of them, but the best we are we got from them and they are still ours. A few years

ago, we in Baltimore entered into a very precious heritage, belonging especially to the younger generation. A young life, full of beauty and promise, went out at the age of twenty-four. Those of us who knew her best were not prepared for the wonderful revelation of what she had done. At seventeen she began her work as a volunteer and was fortunate in being able to do many things that girls of her age often long to do and are seldom allowed to. She entered into the lives of her poor neighbors as truly as Octavia Hill ever did. Hers were the immaterial gifts of love and beauty and in giving them she herself grew up to maturity so that her life here on earth instead of being unfinished was complete. After her death I followed her shining footsteps into the little houses where she used to go. As I sat in the kitchen talking to one of her friends, the woman told me with tears in her eyes of what her coming had meant. "She got my boy to stop drinking. When she asked you to do a thing, you would, you know, because she had the lovingest way. Some people have a driving way, but hers was always the lovingest." It was not the presents which she brought at Christmas by which she was remembered but the visits on Christmas Eve, when she trimmed the room with greens and sat reading *The Night Before Christmas* with the children on her lap. On hard days, instead of listening to long tales of woe she would say, "You are all tired out; now leave that scrubbing and let me take you over the bridge and back." From the houses of the neighborhood I went to the district office, where the story of friendship with the workers had the same quality of generous giving of self. I knew that it was a heritage that I must get and keep and pass on. If we have done anything for the young people in Baltimore (and I think it is our special contribution), it has been done in her name.

As I look toward the future of volunteer work, it seems to me to be threatened and weakened by certain new conditions: First, by the growth of community funds where the burden of the work is shared by so many that it is felt by few; second, by the professional excellence of the trained worker which makes the admiring volunteer ask, "Where do I come in?" and the efficient professional worker asks, "Why do I need to be bothered?"; third, by the distractions of modern life in cities which leave so little time for any one thing; and last, by the increase in comforts and luxuries which is slowly making us soft and unwilling to do the hard thing. But these are problems for other speakers to talk about. My subject is the past and its heritage. In a humble way we are all a part of the heritage that is passed on, for the present is always encroaching on the future and rapidly receding into the past. The spirit of service cannot be taught; it must be caught, and personality is the medium of contact. From the lives of the good and the great and the humbly faithful, the human spirit is forever quickened and renewed.

THE SPIRIT OF SOCIAL CASE WORK[1]

PORTER R. LEE

Director, New York School of Social Work

SOCIAL case work as a recognized form of service is a comparatively recent development. So far as known, the term "social work" first appears in the Proceedings of the National Conference for the year 1902, less than twenty-five years ago. "Social case work," as a term describing one phase of social work, was a still later development.

The expansion of forms of service in behalf of disabled and unprivileged persons which has been accomplished since social work as a term came into use has been rapid and, from many points of view, amazing. Prior to 1900 we had, as well-established forms of social case work, each with a typical organization basis and carrying on within themselves the will to achieve constantly higher standards, only social work with families and some forms of child welfare. Practically all the other forms of social case work which in 1926 we so easily

[1] Given at the New Jersey State Conference of Social Work, October 28, 1926.

take for granted are less than a quarter century old. The list will include among others hospital social service, psychiatric social work, visiting teaching, probation, vocational counseling, and, in their modern phases, protective work with children and travelers' aid.

This development has been spasmodic at times; it has been uneven in terms of its adaptation to human need; it has had ill-considered expression in many places; in some of its phases it has meant undertaking work prematurely, before communities were ready for it, before our equipment was equal to the formal assumption of responsibilities which a separate organization implies.

These disadvantages, however, have been of altogether minor significance. In the main, the increasing variety in the forms of social case work and their establishment on a suitable basis has been sound, and the chief evidence of this lies in the fact that American communities which have achieved this development are in a better position than ever before to render effective service to human beings in need. We have succeeded in stabilizing services to needy and unadjusted persons where formerly, in an unorganized state, they were too haphazard. The response of the modern community's charity to its need is surer, more effective, and less subject to delay. Stabilization of this sort also means greater certainty of growth for the future.

The establishment of these various forms of social case work has not been easy. We have had all the difficulties of the pioneer in deciding what it is that we have wanted to organize. Moreover, the development of these programs has not been achieved without other forms of struggle. In many cases, they have gone counter to accepted traditions regarding charitable work. It was a struggle to subordinate the use of material relief to programs of social treatment. It was a struggle to replace the mechanical penal sentence with probation for juvenile offenders. It was a struggle to secure recognition of the foster home as a method of meeting the needs of the dependent child worthy of equal consideration with the institution and, in many types of cases, worthy to supplant the institution. It was a struggle to secure the presence of the visiting teacher in our schools. These developments in many instances not only violated accepted ways of reaching human need: they violated traditional ethical standards such as those having to do with the individual's responsibility for his own behavior.

When one has to struggle for the recognition of his program, it tends to assume in his eyes a certain sacred character to which it may not be entitled. Moreover, when one's program has passed the experimental stage, has become accepted by a public and has achieved certain established ways of putting itself into effect, it becomes institutionalized to an extent, giving to its sponsors a certain sense of security which may have a lulling effect not altogether conducive to vitality. This attitude of sacredness around something for which we have fought, and this crystallizing tendency in an institutionalized program are both sources of danger. Because social case work is so new in American life, because it has so recently been freed from the necessity of struggling for recognition, these dangers have not yet become acute. Because, however, they seem clearly ahead of us, showing some evidence that they have already emerged, I should like to consider some of their implications and some ways by which we may avoid them.

After we become conscious of possessing a program and have acquired facility in skilled service, the first risk we run is that we shall be more interested in programs than in persons. If all of us should put to ourselves the question, "Am I interested more in social case work or in the benefits to disabled and unprivileged persons which social case work enables me to confer?" I think that honest answers might be startling. We must not minimize the satisfactions which there are to an intelligent person in the consciousness of growing skill and broadening knowledge which marks successful professional activity. Absorption in this aspect of professional work, however, may easily denote greater interest in a program than in the persons it serves. I have known teachers more interested in geometry or economics than in pupils. I have known physicians more interested in tuberculosis or endocrine glands than in patients. I have known case workers more interested in family budgets and diagnosis than in their clients.

Such an indictment could never be made of a whole profession—for no community would tolerate the continuance of a profession to which so wholesale an indictment applied. Those practitioners to whom it applies are the exceptions, but their very appearance as exceptions indicates that the danger exists. After all, despite the claims of some pure scientists, scientific knowledge, philosophical contemplation, research, cultural study and organized activity have neither value nor justification except as ultimately they serve some human need. It is entirely possible to be engaged in an intellectual or professional pursuit without professional contact with other human beings and still achieve results of value in human life. This is true of the laboratory chemists; it is true of much of our own research. But in those forms of professional practice in which the practitioner deals directly with human beings—such as teaching, medicine, and social case work—the best results and the highest form of service are achievable only when the practitioner is as aware of the persons with whom he deals as he is of the implications of his program.

This tendency to exalt the importance of one's program and to shelter oneself within it, when it has achieved acceptance as an institution, presents another danger, for both these frames of mind almost inevitably lessen the vitality of the program. They remove the stimulus to constant search for higher standards, better methods, new knowledge. There is much less incentive to growth in an established program than there is in a program which is still struggling for acceptance. The crusader, the zealot, and the fanatic sometimes seem to us unbalanced and possessed of a distorted view of life. They have, however, one valuable attribute which may be less conspicuous in those of us who are plodding along on programs in behalf of which we no longer have to fight—a sparkling faith in the need of men for the gospel which they have to offer.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. Let me repeat, therefore, that I am not indicting social case work. I do not believe that we as a group are smug, lethargic, or satisfied with our contribution to social well-being, all of them earmarks of the dangers I have been discussing. If we can trust the lessons of history, however, our rather recently acquired stability, our growing prestige in the eyes of the general public will inevitably bring us face to face with these very dangers. What can we do to avoid them? For it is not inevitable that they should become entrenched and, moreover, the remedy for them lies in our own hands. What is involved in our maintaining successfully as deep an interest in persons as we have in programs?

I believe that the safeguards to this mental attitude are partly philosophical and partly intensely practical: The first safeguard seems to me to lie in recognizing a subtle but profoundly significant difference between fighting for one's beliefs and fighting for the things in which one believes. When one is more concerned with the success of his own agency than with the sum total of service which his community renders to its poor and disabled, he is apparently more interested in his own beliefs than in the things in which he believes. When one has devised a method of investigation, of diagnosis, and of treatment, when through experience he has come to believe in the rightness of certain ways of dealing with dependence, with delinquency, and with other forms of need, it is not always easy for him to remember that these have come to be beliefs to which he may be more loyal than he is to the ideal of service in terms of greater happiness, comfort, and well-being on the part of clients.

But these latter are really the things in which he believes. The machinery of social case work, useful as it is, is only a means for making them effective. In my experience, most of the difficulty of securing concerted action on the part of intelligent people is due to a too unflinching loyalty on the part of all of us to our own beliefs. Such beliefs are indispensable to any satisfying organization of individual existence. They do, however, create difficulties in human intercourse when they blind us to the realities of life out of which in part they have grown. Sickness, poverty, crime, and unhappiness are some of the realities of life with which social case workers deal. In the long run, I believe that they deal with them most effectively if they are willing constantly to subject their standardized methods of organization and work to critical scrutiny in

order to determine whether these standards are as well adapted to meet human need as they were when first developed. Sensitiveness to the things in which ultimately we believe, as well as to the specific beliefs which we hold, will in the long run, I think, give us an important safeguard against the dangers of institutionalism.

Somewhat closer to practical affairs is a second possible safeguard. In social case work a client should be regarded as an individual first and only later as a representative of a type. In any continuing experience with a given problem we are bound gradually to build up certain generalizations. We may start with a determination to render some assistance to a certain type of unfortunate, unmarried mothers, for example. In the beginning, every unmarried mother will present herself as an individual with problems, difficulties, needs of her own. It is inevitable, however, if we are to develop for unmarried mothers the kind of stabilized service which we discussed earlier, that we should gradually come to understand certain things to be true of all or of almost all women in this predicament. The problem of the unmarried mother, quite apart from any individual so classified, has certain aspects peculiar to the group. Similarly we know that some certain things are true of deserted families, of dependent widows with children, of homeless men, of the unadjusted child in school, of the juvenile delinquent. The very stability which organization achieves is largely based upon our discovery of some of these generalized truths, concealed in established facts. Once these facts are established, it is not possible to render the greatest service to clients without taking them into account. The danger lies in our assuming that what is true of a type is true in all particulars of the individual with whom we are dealing at the moment, and that nothing else is true of him.

Not long ago I was discussing with a group of case workers a situation in which a young widow, the mother of two children, and her mother appealed to a social agency for the commitment of the young woman's illegitimate baby. They wished the commitment to be made without publicity as neither the other children in the family nor the neighbors were aware of the birth of the illegitimate child. The discussion centered around the steps taken by the agency to work out a plan in this situation which would best serve the interests of the baby and the other persons concerned. The plan involved effecting, if possible, some significant changes in attitude on the part of the mother and the grandmother. In the discussion, the group of case workers had arrived at a number of interesting and apparently sound conclusions when it was suddenly revealed for the first time that this was a colored family. There was an instant reaction on the part of practically all the members of the group that this changed the whole situation, the reason for this action being the apparent assumption that certain things are true of colored families, as colored families, which would have influenced the members of the group at various points in the discussion. With this in mind, the group went back over their decisions, with the result, after further thoughtful discussion, that not a single one was changed in any particular. Now undoubtedly many things are true of colored families that are not true of families of other races. It is necessary that these differences should be taken into account. Unfortunately, it is also possible that we may be so conscious of these truths regarding a colored race as to allow them an exaggerated influence in our appraisal of colored people as individuals.

This same tendency is true with reference to generalizations regarding any type with which we ordinarily deal. Once we become aware of the facts which characterize unmarried mothers as a group, we are in a position to deal more intelligently with the individual unmarried mother; but we are also in danger of doing her, as an individual, an injustice because we discern her more clearly as a representative of a type than as a human being with characteristics and difficulties that are peculiar to her. We run this risk with reference to feeblemindedness, to desertion, to juvenile delinquency, to dependence and to all the problems which lie in the field of social case work. I do not think that our work suffers from this risk more than does any other profession. It is, however, a danger which can be avoided only by that attitude of mind which realizes that a human being in need of treatment

must be regarded as an individual first and only later as a representative of a type.

A still more practical consideration bearing upon the avoidance of dangers peculiar to stabilized programs has to do with our own efforts as case workers to improve the quality of our equipment. It is not too easy, in the pressure of work in a busy agency or in the isolation in which small city workers must of necessity carry on, to find the opportunity or the means for continuous self-improvement. Nevertheless, continuous self-improvement seems to me an obligation which case workers carry.

Within the last few days, I had a conversation with a man who was installing a new telephone in my home. I was asking him how rapidly the New York Telephone Company is extending the dial system which was recently introduced in New York City. He told me that since the Company had adopted the dial system so many improvements had been made in the mechanism of the dial telephone that the system installed within the last two years in New York City had already in many particulars become antiquated.

Any radio fan knows how rapidly radio apparatus becomes obsolete. This is as true of many forms of intellectual activity as it is of mechanical apparatus. It is certainly true in some ways of social case work. What we have learned in the last twenty-five years or more make the accepted standards in family case work and child welfare (to take two of the older forms of case work) in 1926 vastly different in many particulars from those of 1900. I am not sure that as much of our philosophy, of our methods, and of other parts of our equipment have become obsolete as would be true of dial telephones or radio apparatus; but I am sure that, in addition to the older resources of case work, new ones are constantly developing with which modern social case workers ought to be familiar. I am also sure that, with reference to some of our chronic problems such as co-operation between social agencies, the use of case records, the organization of material relief, the supervision of foster homes, the study of personality, and so on, here and there all over the country social case workers are finding new ways. Many of these discoveries are applicable elsewhere. Many of them, which are not applicable elsewhere, are nevertheless suggestive to other local communities conscious of the same difficulties, but less conscious of progress in meeting them.

In other words, social case work is still a developing enterprise. It is finding new ways of achieving its purposes. It is securing new revelations regarding the human beings whom it serves. It is developing new resources constantly which give its service greater scope, greater depth, greater dignity. I hope that social case work will never become so standardized as to establish a pattern for itself with the implication that this pattern must be followed wherever social case work is practiced. What will meet the needs of New York City will not necessarily meet the needs of Trenton, N. J., Denver, Colorado, or Fort Worth, Texas. What can be done in a rural county cannot necessarily be done in a small town or a large city. Nevertheless, in the long run, progress in the large city will be more rapid if there is progress also in the rural county and in the small town; and vice versa.

What we urgently need in social case work is the establishment through conference of the clearest ideals, the soundest and the most useful resources of all kinds which have been developed anywhere in the country. This formulation, based on our experience, would then be regarded not as a pattern which every community and every agency must follow but as a reservoir of suggestions from which every community and every agency can draw for whatever it may contain that would be locally useful.

In other words, the local community and its local agencies must be responsible for their own standards of work. This statement means two things: It means first, that there must never be established in connection with American social case work any overlord with headquarters in New York City or elsewhere that shall dictate to local communities what they shall do. It means also, however, that local agencies must never be content with their achievements up to date, must not develop the spirit of institutionalism or the consciousness of arrival at final truth.

There are certain earmarks of institutionalism which are easily recognized. An

agency which has gone for a long time without new blood in its board of directors, without new blood in its staff, without increase in its budget, without having settled to its own satisfaction and to the satisfaction of others in the community certain chronic problems concerned with its relations to other agencies, without having introduced into its own work new projects, new methods, new emphases contributing to the completeness with which it meets a need in its community—such an agency may well ask itself whether it has not become so institutionalized as to have lost the vital spark. None of these things is necessarily fatal to the glow of the vital spark, but collectively they are ominous, and individually any one of them is ample reason for an agency to make an honest appraisal of its current state of usefulness.

I realize that we have not, in social work, developed as many facilities for stimulating growth on the part of social workers as have other professions. Our literature is meager, our periodicals almost nil and our opportunities for group discussion spasmodic and unsatisfactory. The remedy for this, however, is in our own hands. I am not undertaking to present to this audience any concrete suggestions as to newer methods, newer standards which ought to be adopted. I am trying only to point out that constant reaching out for the stimulus and the practical helpfulness of discoveries in other places and by other fields is one of the marks of a progressively useful service and for social case work it is one of the safeguards against a lapse into institutionalism.

One final suggestion I wish to make is that no test of the efficient case worker or the efficient agency is more important than ability to serve human need or, in more technical parlance, to practice a profession without adequate facilities. We could have little respect for a physician, trained in a metropolitan medical school and metropolitan practice, with access to all the aids to diagnosis and treatment which modern laboratories, clinics, and specialists represent, who could not betake himself to a backwoods locality and there practice his profession. We could not respect a physician in a metropolitan city who did not make use of every medical source available. But, as a physician, he can never be regarded as skillful if he cannot treat human ills with some measure of success without access to these facilities. It is sometimes thought that social case workers who have secured their training and early experience in the large cities are helpless when filling positions in communities whose social resources are less well developed. I hope this is not true. Our aim should be to develop case workers whose skill lies in their unerring analysis and diagnosis of human need and their ability to treat such need in the circumstances and with the resources which they find available.

Some such conception of a skilled worker as this seems to me important for two reasons. In the first place, I believe there is an unnecessary amount of what the psychiatrists call a consciousness of inferiority on the part of many local agencies and local workers because they think they are not reaching the standards of the larger cities. In the second place, I think there may be a tendency on the part of agencies, including both boards of directors and staff workers, to try to go faster in their progress towards high standards than their communities are willing to follow. It is quite possible to work in a primitive fashion according to standards which have elsewhere been abandoned and still be working with the highest, most modern form of skill, provided that those who work in this fashion, because local conditions require it, have their eyes set upon a future in which better things will be possible in their community because they have themselves started in that direction and are willing to travel as fast as their communities will follow, but no faster.

One of the most stubborn types of institutionalism, it must be admitted, exists in those communities in which the development of social work has been backward, in which boards of directors and staff workers have accepted things as they are and resigned themselves to an inevitably static future. The remedy for this may not lie in any revolutionary change in attitude or program but rather in a much more cautious development which at the outset may be nothing more than a conviction that change is both desirable and possible and, with this conviction, a determination to find those first

steps in progress which can be taken surely and safely in the circumstances. This kind of development will be much more common when we all, board members and staff members alike, accept the conviction that social case work is not primarily a matter of machinery, facilities, or budgets, but very much more a matter of personnel on board and staff composed of persons whose spirit is alive and who have been equipped with an informed intelligence.

I should perhaps apologize for having presented to this Conference a paper which contains little but familiar platitudes. A platitude, however, becomes such because it contains so much obvious truth that there is no question about it. The difficulty with platitudinous philosophy is that most of us, because of its very familiarity, forget that it exists. The translation of platitudes into practice is frequently a key to saner, sounder, more effective ways of living. It is easier to formulate platitudes than to devise effective ways of translating them into practice. Through such translations, however, much of the world's progress has been achieved. As one final platitude let me say I believe we should do better social case work if more frequently we abandoned absorption in the day's work and ruminated more deeply upon our reasons for doing social work at all.

THE VISITING TEACHER EVALUATES RESULTS

SHIRLEY LEONARD
Visiting Teacher, Rochester, N. Y.

HAVE you ever envied your stenographer because she can turn to a certain number of carbon copies at the end of the day as proof of what she has done? Or have you ever wished that, like a taxi driver who stops his car and checks up on distances covered, you might stop for a few moments the great whirl of human activities and see just how far you and your clients have progressed? Alas, the case worker must rejoice if her client seems to be even crawling in the right direction! And surprising it would be to her if, having started him on the road which she thinks will land him somewhere, he doesn't meet more persuasive friends who send him off on a by-path.

The visiting teacher doing case work with school children meets with the same discouragements and limitations as do family case workers, since practically 50 per cent of her time is spent in educating parents. But her work with the children themselves in the school is often more stimulating and encouraging. There is a more natural method of approach—a chance of seeing a child five days a week and of watching him in his social reactions to a group of his peers. There is easier and freer talking on the part of the child than on the part of his parents, and there is, in addition to the visiting teacher's observations, that sort of cumulative evidence of reactions from a teacher in contact with the child some thirty hours a week and the occasional trained observations of the nurse or the psychologist or the psychiatrist. The child's visits to the visiting teacher's office to record that "I am not going to do those bad things any more," or "I got an A in arithmetic," or "I've been in bed at eight o'clock every night since you were at our house," stand out some days as marks of real progress and thrill the worker with the feeling that she is really seeing a forward move in the developing personality of the child.

The following stories are illustrative of two types of problems met with in the visiting teacher's day—problems varying from the child who has stolen for the first time and whose further school career depends on the immediate right handling of this one incident, to the child whose home conditions are seriously affecting his mental health and school progress—a situation needing long careful working with the parents.

Michael

Michael entered the principal's office slowly, looking half scared and half sheepish, as if he didn't know himself what stand he was going to take in the coming interview. Michael was not used to interviews of this sort. Two weeks ago, if he had taken stock of his standing in school, he might have listed promptness, regular attendance, good citizenship, and excellent marks as his assets.

In fact there would have been no glaring liabilities. Michael himself in a certain inarticulate fashion might have considered that in the eyes of the other pupils his greatest liability was his mother—she had appeared so rough and foreign and loud spoken the day she had come to the *Know Your School Week* entertainment. She did not wear her skirts short nor color on her cheeks. Michael knew that she yelled at him and his sisters more than some of the American mothers do to their children. She was different and Michael didn't want to be different. He wanted to be a real American.

The first time he went to Scout meeting a month ago, he saw some boys wearing such good looking sport stockings—the same kind that he saw the men for whom he caddied wear on the golf links. If only he had some money to buy him a pair! But if he mentioned this to his mother, she would talk about the rent and the baby's hospital bill and the money she sent back each month to her mother in Poland. For his part he could not see why they should be bothered about an old woman in Poland he had never seen. Michael had felt sore about everything when he went to that Scout meeting two weeks ago. He just did not have the same chance the other kids had. What was the use? There was Dick Maloney for instance, whose father was a detective (Michael's worked in a blast furnace) who always seemed to have money and such good clothes and lots of fun. That night Dick wore a brand new overcoat. Michael wondered if, besides, he had money in the pockets. Michael slipped into Dick's locker which had been left half open and felt cautiously about. Yes, there was a pocket book and three one dollar bills in it. How easy it would be to hide them in his own pocket. No one could possibly know!

It was all over in a minute. Michael went out to the Scout drill and from then on—life had seemed so different. Even when he first joined the others on the gym floor he felt as if they were eyeing him. Next morning when he could not keep his mind on his lessons because he kept wondering when he would get down to the store for the stockings without his mother's knowing it, the teacher spoke to him as she had never spoken to him before. Did she suspect he was a thief?

And finally when it had all come out and everyone in his room knew he was the sneak, he had begged the principal not to tell his mother.

Well, here he was—about to be humiliated again before the principal and now before still another person. The principal called her the visiting teacher. Must the whole world know of his disgrace? She looked inquiringly at Michael. She asked him about his record at school. He had been absent? No. What were his marks? She looked pleased at the A's and B's he mentioned. Then he must have a good head and know how to use it. And had he been recommended by the teacher for Scouts? Why? Michael explained how and why he had stood high in citizenship. A good citizen takes responsibility for his own acts. A good Scout is honest. Did Michael believe that? Michael did. Did he believe he had done wrong in taking the three dollars? He most certainly did. Then, was not the only possible course for Michael to tell his mother about it and offer to try to pay her back the three dollars through his own work, provided she would repay Dick now? Yes, but Michael couldn't do it—his mother would kill him! The visiting teacher would go home with Michael and explain to his mother that he had already suffered a great deal in his mind, because of what he had done and would like a chance to show that he was sorry. If she would try to excuse him and let him work hard to pay back the money . . . would Michael think he could face the Scouts if he had not been truthful to his mother and taken responsibility for his own actions? . . .

—

Michael pushed the door open and rushed into a dingy little kitchen where a large, heavy-set Polish woman stood over some kettles on a much cluttered stove. An excited conversation in Polish started. Did you tell her everything? He nodded. His hand reached out for the three dollars his mother produced from a shabby pocketbook. He uttered a few words in Polish, possibly a "thank you" and dashed out the door toward school leaving the visiting teacher to find a Polish interpreter and talk the whole matter out with the mother.

Michael beamed at the visiting teacher next day in the hall. Didn't he feel better than he had for the past two weeks and wasn't it a relief not to be deceiving everybody? The difference in his whole bearing from the day before gave added emphasis to his smiling assent.

Isadore

Isadore is a tall, loose-jointed Jewish boy whose body has grown too fast for his strength and whose vocabulary has far out-stripped his real understanding. His strangely chosen words—so many of them long and cumbersome and bookish—are in humorous contrast to his childish ideas. Once while away on a visit his strenuous objections to staying longer were really due to the fact that he was not being allowed to have his own way as at home, but he wrote his mother: "Six weeks is permanent enough for me in this habitation." One wishes for humor in his make-up to add a few light touches—he needs them in his home. Unfortunately he seems sadly lacking in any kind of light touch. His big dark eyes, appearing darker because of the pallor of his skin, his small features and rather sensitive mouth with under jaw drooping a little, and his inability to smile make him appear to have a hopeless attitude toward life. As one teacher explained it, "he has an expression you would expect to find on a Russian refugee who has witnessed the massacre of his family." But this is not the case. Isadore was brought up in this country, and as far as we know had no sensational experience during his childhood.

Since he is an only child, Mrs. L, his mother, has been able to center all her worrying about him, and she is a person of infinite capacity for worrying. She is a serious minded substantial sort of woman—trained to be a bookkeeper, married when young, and immediately converted into a hard working anxious home maker. In Isadore she has found her greatest interest and her greatest anxiety. She has made decisions for him. He asks her what shirt to put on and when to start. She has fluttered about him for years; worrying about him when he played baseball, fearful if he got his feet wet; eager to know the slightest detail of his school progress. She talks incessantly in a whining nasal voice in which the whine and nasal quality are accentuated as she becomes excited—and she becomes excited easily. Her face twitches and her words flow nervously on and on. Isadore's passive expression and inarticulateness are in such direct contrast that it is almost as if he were making a conscious effort to have only one of his mother's kind in his family.

Isadore was quite devoted to his mother until his fifteenth year when his entire attitude seemed to change. He became critical of her, even abusive. Her nervous nagging increased with this strange, incomprehensible attitude of his. He grew fault-finding and untidy about his person. In school he changed from a well-behaved and orderly student who got along nicely with teachers and pupils to a very difficult pupil with a violent antagonism to one teacher. He loved history and felt exceedingly well versed in it. Once when his family were struggling along in a vain effort to pay their bills he was given five dollars and spent it for historical novels. About this time he got a strange obsession about his history teacher, that she was unfair to him, and stopped school. Nothing could persuade him to go on. He was examined by a psychiatrist who pronounced him a "potential praecox with a very good chance of escaping mental deterioration" if he were put into a different environment.

After every possible effort through the scholarship visiting teacher and through various members of the high school faculty had failed to get him back to school, he took a job—a perfectly legitimate move provided he attended continuation school. This he absolutely refused to do. And right at this point occurred an oversight—a slip-up in the case worker's day's work which, even though explained by pressure of work, at the same time produced almost a tragedy in the L family. The visiting teacher failed to notify the attendance department that this was an unusual situation, so the parents were haled into police court for breaking the school law. Isadore defied the judge, declared that no one could make him go to school. The father, terrified by the crowded court room and the sternness of the judge (who had not the slightest inkling that he was dealing with a mental case), knew only one course to take: namely, after acknowledging that he could not make the boy go to school, but not attempting any explanation of his strange actions, he agreed to follow their advice and filed a petition in children's court charging the boy with being ungovernable. It was at this juncture that the visiting teacher who handles court cases found in the anteroom of the juvenile court a pathetic trio—Isadore, pale and wan with a ghastly hunted expression, listening in helpless silence while his mother alternately railed and whined and his father, a stocky, phlegmatic, red-faced man listened patiently to the mother and waited to be told by the probation officer what to do next. The mother's plaints were first against him for filing the petition; second against the school; third against the world in general for giving her such a raw deal.

And no one could deny that she had had one.

The father is a skilled tailor, a good workman, used to commanding high wages. Several years ago he became irritated at being put on piece work and quit his job. Some altercation with his union followed and he failed to be taken back. Day after day he had been presenting himself at any job where there might be a day's work and day after day he had been turned away. At this time he had had no work for six months and a six hundred dollar savings account had been exhausted. The family had gotten down to living on loans—wondering what would happen to them when their loan was gone.

All this was having a serious effect on the mother's already nervous condition. The visiting teacher realized immediately that, even though Isadore was released from the detention room of the S. P. C. C., where he had been sent from police court, it would do him no good to go home so long as his mother was there. The S. P. C. C. did not want to handle the case, especially after Isadore had appealed to them with great dignity not to write to his out-of-town relatives on S. P. C. C. paper, and gladly left it in the hands of the visiting teacher. Finally, after interviewing the psychiatrist, probation officer and S. P. C. C. agent, and after much nerve-wracking argument with the mother, the following plan was worked out:

The juvenile court allowed the father to withdraw the petition. The S. P. C. C. detention home released the boy to his parents. The home of an uncle and aunt in Massachusetts was investigated by a visiting teacher who happened to be nearby and a favorable reply as to the atmosphere was received. The landlord and friend secured another loan for the family from which he bought Isadore a new suit of clothes and helped the father to get him off for a prolonged summer visit with the aunt and uncle who were given an idea of Isadore's generally nervous condition but no information as to his recent contact with court and S. P. C. C. He was referred to a Boston psychiatrist in case of illness and a full report of his case was sent there to be on file if they needed it. A long letter was sent to Isadore telling him of all the various points of historical interest in and about Boston and encouraging him to visit them. The mother was gotten into a convalescent home and an effort to get the father steady work was made but

proved fruitless. Not until two months later did he get any work and then it was irregular.

Meanwhile the school summer vacation passed. The visiting teacher waited anxiously to see whether the visit in Boston would change Isadore's determination never to return to school, for she believed that on the right school adjustment depended his complete adjustment to life in general. Such a distinct mental type as he would never find the right adaptation in an existence where manual labor was the chief activity. Fortunately for Isadore his parents had always shared in his scholarly ambition. Failing to get an education would mean not only a sense of defeat to him but the added realization that he had disappointed them. Isadore and his mother were a welcome sight in the visiting teacher's office on the first day of school. He had filled out a bit and had a trifle better color. He had enjoyed the visit to his relatives but was glad to get back home. He had decided to go back to school if he did not have to return to the same one where he had had his trouble in the spring. He could not stand that. He would go on through school and college and be a writer.

Arrangements were made for a school transfer. The visiting teacher offered to go with him to the new school, hoping of course that he preferred to go alone. He answered that he preferred to go without her but wished his mother to go with him. His mother, delighted at the improvement in Isadore, actually smiled during the interview and her voice had lost some of its nervous irritating tone.

But this change in the mother was merely temporary. When the visiting teacher called a week later she was once again in quite a state. Isadore was over-exercising in the new school. He had played soccer all one afternoon and returned exhausted—would he have to play ball even though the psychiatrist had said it would be good for him? The father still did not have steady work—what was going to happen to them? When urged not to let Isadore hear her agonize over their troubles, she assured the visiting teacher that no one outside could understand them. After an hour of hectic conversation, during which the visiting teacher's constant refrain was, "but you have this to be thankful for, that Isadore has not gone to pieces as we feared, last spring," the visiting teacher finally told her about a story she had once read where one member of the family did all the worrying. Finally the family got together and decided to hire a professional worrier. Now, ended the visiting teacher—since Isadore's welfare depended so much upon her state of mind, would not Mrs. L allow the visiting teacher to be their professional worrier? Mrs. L finally smiled a little over this and agreed to shift one or two items of anxiety for the following week. She would let the visiting teacher do the worrying about Isadore's over-exercising and failing mathematics.

The visiting teacher then got in touch with the high school coach in order to warn him to watch Isadore to see that he did not exercise to the point of extreme exhaustion. She also had a few censored facts about his mental condition sent to his teachers so that they might be especially tactful with him and encourage him whenever possible. With one of those glows that we feel sometimes when we think we are handling a matter with an especially delicate and tactful touch, the visiting teacher carefully kept herself out of the picture as far as the new school was concerned. Isadore should not be hampered in this new school environment by having teachers and the other pupils know that a woman was following him up. In addition he was to be especially encouraged by the attention and praise of the teachers for whom he did good work. The glow faded at the next news from Isadore, brought to the office by his mother. She said he was wondering why the visiting teacher was no longer interested in his school progress; and he didn't like to have the teachers praise him—they made him feel foolish. The visiting teacher called off the teachers and called *on* herself. She sent for Isadore to congratulate him on his report which showed all A's and B's, except one C in mathematics.

Isadore was losing sleep over mathematics. His mother reported with tears in her voice that he stayed up late at night, awoke early in the morning, refused to eat and was more and more nervous and unstable—all because he feared failure in mathematics. A volunteer tutor was secured through the Big Brothers Association—a fine wholesome person who would overlook Isadore's peculiarities and unreasonableness. Meanwhile the promise of work was secured for his father.

You may ask, why struggle so to keep a boy like him in school? It is not so much for the intellectual contribution he can make as it is for the integration of his personality. As the psychiatrist says, "If you take away the school interest from Isadore, you take away practically everything." It is impossible to imagine him at the present time taking a place in industry or adapting himself to the ordinary "job" that would be open to a boy of his age and capacity.

And so we struggle on—the boy, the parents, the friend and landlord, the teachers, the tutor, and the visiting teacher—all trying to modify the home environment and the mental quirks, so that Isadore may develop into a normal individual.

It is slow work, all of it. So, I expect, did our own parents and teachers feel about our progress during our adolescent years. But it is faster work when the individual is fifteen than when he is twenty-five or thirty-five. How many times have those of us who have attempted case work with adults excused our meager results by saying, "If we had only gotten him young, but now he is so set!" Fortunate are we in our work with children if we can help to determine the right "set."

STUDENT'S PROGRESS

THE student despaired. For days she had realized that she stood at the parting of the ways, so far as case work was concerned. How possibly justify one's relationship to one's client? Are we sincere in professing friendship for an utter stranger? If not, the keystone is gone from the arch of inquiry, treatment, service. If one comes to you for help of a tangible sort—health care, financial assistance, employment—the way is more clear, but when an individual does not come for help and has to be made conscious of his own problem, then indeed one's path is beset with difficulties. Has one the right to pry and probe, to apply the searchlight to this and that dark corner of another's life? These were some of the questions that had been insistently pressing for answer.

The issue was brought to sharp focus by her most recent assignment. She had been advised to see Miss Vermyl, former wife of her client's deceased husband, in order to get from her information relative to the legality of the second marriage and the status of the three children now in the care of a children's society. This seemed a distinctly prying act, in direct violation of the confidence of Mrs. de Jong, her client—who, of course, was unaware of the disclosure of the previous marriage.

The student had seen Mrs. de Jong, had spent several hours with her and afforded some measure of comfort, as evidenced by Mrs. de Jong's request that she write her. The conversation had ranged over many topics, with reserve apparent only when mention had been made of the close relatives in Holland who "do not write often." A beginning had been made at friendship with her children and the student had gradually come to feel that the Family Welfare Society had a definite function to fulfil in its attempt to draw and hold together the scattered threads spelling family unity for these children, soon, perhaps, to be deprived of their mother. But now, Miss Vermyl was too much. Mrs. de Jong had referred to her as a "friend"; from another source had come the information that this "friend" who had interested herself so greatly in the family's welfare, was, in reality, the former wife of Mr. de Jong. Had a divorce occurred, was the second alliance a true marriage, were the children legitimate offspring and so protected in their rights? These questions indicate some of the reasons why the student's next step obviously was to see Miss Vermyl; yet her every instinct made her shrink from the task.

Four o'clock found her in Miss Vermyl's sitting-room, an invited guest, facing her hostess over the tea table. Friendly conversation proved not difficult in view of the genuine interest and concern felt by both Miss Vermyl and the student for Mrs. de Jong and her children. Half an hour, an hour, passed pleasantly and quickly. The student braced herself, as for an ordeal.

"And, Miss Vermyl, was there not a divorce, ——?"

Miss Vermyl stiffened. "It is not necessary to tell all one knows."

The student froze. Her fears had been realized: she saw herself here as a spy, enjoying hospitality freely extended. She felt the color flooding her face as her position became clear to her. She must go; but how to escape courteously, without hurting her hostess who had been kind to her?

For a moment there was a silence which to the student seemed awkward. Then, to her complete surprise, "How I should love to be a social worker—what a tremendously worth-while job it must be!" Quicker than thought the student rose and spontaneously placed both hands on Miss Vermyl's shoulders. "But you *are* a social worker, Miss Vermyl. You have done more for Mrs. de Jong and her children than anyone else, far more than we can ever hope to do. Mrs. de Jong thinks of you constantly, she relies on you as one of her dearest friends." The tribute was unquestionably direct and sincere.

Miss Vermyl looked up and tears were in her eyes. "My dear, you have made me happy. It is right that you should know this story ——"

Some time later the student returned thoughtfully to the office. She had effected her own conversion, by the discovery that in this one instance at least a genuine interest and the desire to help had justified her in seeking the truth; that sincerity and case work had proved themselves partners.

H. P. K.

THE FAMILY

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EDITORIALS

BECAUSE of the present widespread interest in "measuring sticks" in social work, the 1926 Institute of Family Social Work assigned to one of its three committees the subject "Measurements in Family Social Work." This committee was composed of eight members of the Institute, with Miss Sophie Hardy as chairman,[1] Miss Katherine Quig as secretary, and Mr. Swift as consultant or advisor.

The committee soon agreed that, although volume of work may be measured statistically, we have at present no accepted method of measuring progress or accomplishments in case work. For such evaluation new methods must be devised, and the committee devoted its time during the four weeks of the Institute in the endeavor to discover new units of measurement.

Analysis necessarily precedes measurement. Since the development of personality is the primary objective of case work, the committee felt that any measurement of progress must be based upon an analysis of the personality problems with which the case worker is faced. Accepting for this purpose the "behavioristic" viewpoint that the personality of the individual is evidenced by the sum of his habits and mental attitudes, the committee endeavored to analyze the habits and attitudes which might be involved in the personality problems of the non-supporting head of a family. The analysis was put in questionnaire form, with the hope that favorable or unfavorable (plus or minus) answers might indicate the factors which required change, and our success in changing them. Questions upon physical and social environment, by which habits and attitudes are largely conditioned, were included in a separate category.

The committee wished this method to be tested out as a preliminary to further study, and the committee report has therefore been distributed by the American Association for Organizing Family Social Work to those member societies having districted offices and staffs, as it was felt that they would be best equipped for experimentation. The Association will be glad, however, to send the analysis to any non-districted member society free of charge, and to non-member case working agencies at a nominal price of ten cents a copy to cover cost of preparation and mailing.

This project may not yet offer a valid method of measuring accomplishment in case work, but it does give an interesting basis for experimentation in analysis, from which new methods of measurement may possibly be developed. The committee is fully aware of the dangers and inaccuracies involved even in such a cautious approach, and it is hoped that they will be borne constantly in mind by all who make use of the report. But with the present pressure for better methods of interpreting to the public our progress in case work, such experimentation is greatly needed. We shall be interested in hearing from any case working agency which has developed other means of measuring the progress or interpreting the accomplishments of case work.

IN accordance with the vote of the membership of the American Association of Social Workers, the work of the Vocational Bureau will be separated and organized so as to function independently January first. Not only has this difficult organization problem been worked out but the amalgamation of the Vocational Bureau with the personnel service of the National Organization for Public Health Nursing has been achieved.

The new name is "Joint Vocational Service," with an explanatory sub-title, "for social workers and public health nurses." The office will continue to be on

[1] See also "What Measures Have We for Growth in Personality," by Miss Hardy, The Family, December, 1926, page 254.

the second floor of the Russell Sage Foundation Building, at 130 East 22d Street, New York, in rooms adjoining the American Association of Social Workers. Miss Lillian Quinn has been appointed director.

The committee to work out the scheme for reorganization deserves great credit for its clear headed and comprehensive plan for continuing the strength of professional auspices even when independent from the American Association of Social Workers and for finding the financial backing for the new venture. Added to these two definite problems, they faced and accepted the opportunity offered when the National Organization for Public Health Nursing proposed a consolidation.

Fortunately, experimenting with fee charging had been undertaken by both the National Organization for Public Health Nursing and the Vocational Bureau, the former since July 1926 and the latter all of 1926. Both organizations have found decreasing difficulty in collecting fees—most registrants evidently regard fees as a legitimate charge. Income from this source has increased gradually so that estimates based on actual experience could be made for next year's budget. Provision for the budget comes from direct grants from two foundations, from the National Organization for Public Health Nursing, from estimates of fees based upon past collections, and estimates based on renewals from organization contributions made previously to the American Association of Social Workers specifically for its vocational service.

The divorce of the American Association of Social Workers from vocational service as a functional activity should free the organization for the study of some of its immediate problems in the field of research and for the formulation of professional standards. Fortunately, however, the new organization provides for such a close tie-up with the Association that the latter will continue to have a lively contact with the numerous professional problems growing out of personnel work. The participation of the national organizations (the executive committee is to be made up of equal representation from each of three groups—A.A.S.W., N.O.P.H.N., and the other national agencies) assures the assumption of responsibility by those immediately interested in placement and vocational guidance.

The American Association for Organizing Family Social Work will continue its plan of clearing information with the Joint Vocational Service and conferring regularly on problems of vacancies and persons (both placement and vocational guidance). Where both offices are serving, the Joint Vocational Service will collect references and send them out after consultation with and supplementary letters from the American Association.

The Joint Vocational Service (J.V.S., we surmise, will be its nickname) is an important resource to workers in the public health nursing and social work fields and to communities needing well qualified representatives of those fields to serve them. The new name implies practical co-operation—a joint professional enterprise. Our congratulations and good wishes!

VARIOUS efforts to bring about a better understanding of the common problems of the churches and the social agencies and the possibilities of accomplishment through co-operation are going forward in different cities throughout the country. The Boston society has a special committee which has planned a series of six conferences on human problems which clergymen and social workers are facing. The titles suggest the joint responsibility of the church and the social agency in meeting some of the problems of youth, of marriage, of family relationships and of the aged. In Louisville the general secretary has worked out in conjunction with the local clergy a procedure for interplay which must inevitably result in a finer participation of the church in the work of the organized social agency. The Committee on the Church of the New York Charity Organization Society has planned a series of six talks for case workers on "Religious Backgrounds." Field work for students in theological schools is offered by family case work agencies in cities as far apart as San Francisco and New York.

A recent publication of the Pennsylvania Public Charities Association indicates one more effective approach to the problem. "Where to Turn" (whose orange cover should be a protection against its being mis-

laid or forgotten!) is primarily for the use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Province of Washington but it will undoubtedly be of service to social workers also. Brief and readable definitions of the different kinds of organized service are followed by a complete list of the social agencies in the diocese (Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Washington, D. C., Virginia, West Virginia), national agencies, local and state organizations (with reference to available directories of social agencies) as well as those national and local social welfare agencies and institutions maintained by the church.

The booklet is worthy the flattery of widespread imitation. It suggests a practical procedure which need not, however, wait upon the time when funds and energy are available for the compilation and printing of such an exhaustive list. Any local agency might well prepare a mimeographed list of local social services for the use of the clergymen in the community. It will be a disappointment if this pamphlet does not suggest to central councils and to less formal groups of agencies the possibilities of furthering co-operation between the church and the social agencies by concrete information as to services actually available.

CHILD MARRIAGES IN PENNSYLVANIA

ARTHUR DUNHAM

Secretary, Child Welfare Division, Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania

IT WAS in April, 1925, that the Chairman of the Marriage Laws Committee of the Pennsylvania Conference on Social Welfare received this letter from a family worker in one of the smaller communities of the state:

> I have on hand now a case in which the child is fourteen and was married last November. She is mothering four small children who are brothers and sisters of her husband and also caring for the father-in-law. This family of seven are sleeping in one room. . . . I feel that the child is entirely incapable of this responsibility and the father-in-law is not to be trusted with a girl of her reputation. He is unwilling to have me place the children in homes and, of course, my authority goes only as far as the parent is willing.

Later this particular situation was referred to the juvenile court of the county. But the real problem lies back of any remedial action which a court may take. *"The child is fourteen and was married last November."* We are facing an instance of child marriage.

That child marriages constitute a real social problem in the United States, to-day, has been vividly demonstrated by Mary E. Richmond and Fred S. Hall in their study of *Child Marriages*.[1] Not the least startling of their conclusions is their estimate that two-thirds of a million people living in this country to-day have been child brides or have been married to child brides.[2]

About a year ago Pennsylvanians determined to discover Pennsylvania's share in this problem of child marriages. For three years there had been an increasing interest in questions relating to the marriage laws of the state: From 1922 to 1925, Aaron M. Lopez, secretary of the Erie Associated Charities, had given able leadership to the State Conference's Committee on Marriage Laws. In 1924, Allen S. Olmsted, 2nd, a member of the Philadelphia bar serving on Mr. Lopez' committee, had made a scholarly compilation and analysis of the existing marriage laws of Pennsylvania and had drafted a new Marriage Code for the state, based upon the Uniform Marriage Act. In 1925 two marriage bills were proposed, but were offered too late in the session to receive consideration by the Legislature.

At length, in the spring of 1925, the State Conference requested the Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania to carry on the necessary efforts to improve the marriage laws of the state. The request was a natural one, since the Public Charities Association is a statewide citizens' welfare organization, developing its program largely through research, education, and the promotion of welfare legislation. The Child Welfare Divi-

[1] Richmond, Mary E. and Hall, Fred S.: *Child Marriages*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1925, 159 pages.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

sion of the Public Charities Association set out to discover the essential facts in regard to child marriages in Pennsylvania.

According to judicial decisions made under the common law, it is legal in Pennsylvania (as it is in about 12 other states) for a boy fourteen years old to marry a girl of twelve. Parental consent is required where either party to a marriage is under twenty-one.

This startlingly low minimum marriageable age is a legal heritage which traces back to the laws of pagan Rome and which reflects the conception that marriage should be permitted as soon as boys and girls are physically able to exercise the function of procreation. A modern sifting of scientific evidence in regard to physiological readiness for marriage leads to the conservative conclusion that, "while the case on the physiological side is far from complete, the weight of evidence, in so far as we have been able to discover it, is all against marriage for either sex at puberty, against the marriage of girls under sixteen, and, on the whole, though not so conclusively, against marriage for girls under eighteen or for boys under twenty." [3]

But, granted that the legal minimum marriageable age seems excessively low, the next question is whether it makes any practical difference? Are there actually more than a few isolated instances of child marriage?

The Number of Child Brides

With the co-operation and assistance of Russell B. Tewksbury, Sc.D., Acting Registrar of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Vital Statistics, the Child Welfare Division undertook to measure and analyze the number of child marriages which took place in Pennsylvania during 1924. For purposes of this study a child marriage was defined as a marriage in which either party was less than sixteen years old.

A checking of the marriage returns in the office of the State Bureau brought to light the fact that *521 child marriages took place in Pennsylvania during the single year 1924,* all of which were marriages in which the bride was under sixteen. No case of a groom under sixteen was found. The child marriage problem of Pennsylvania is therefore a problem of child brides.

While even the total of 521 marriages may seem small as compared with certain other census figures, it must be recognized that this number is a distinct understatement of the problem. In the first place, the 521 cases represent only those girls under sixteen who applied for a license and who had parental consent. How many more cases there were where girls under sixteen falsified their ages in order to secure the license without parental consent, we do not know. In a recent "Study of Ages of the Parties of Certain Child Marriages and Youthful Marriages in Philadelphia during 1924," the investigators, Elisabeth D. Eggleston and Adele U. Keller, discovered 61 instances where girls had misrepresented their ages to avoid the necessity of parental consent; and in 5 of these 61 cases, the actual ages of the girls were under sixteen.[1] This study covers only a limited period of time and only one county. Moreover, Philadelphia is conveniently near to a notorious "marriage market" town in a neighboring state which has a lower age of parental consent for girls—a fact which attracts youthful couples to that state and town and which, conversely, reduces the amount of misrepresentation of ages in Philadelphia.

But even this is not the whole story as to the extent of the problem of child marriages. There were a minimum of 521 child marriages in Pennsylvania during the *one year* 1924. But each of these 521 child brides has a lifetime before her and every year during which she lives other child brides will enter marriage at the age of fifteen or less. Looking backward, we note that the same process has been going on for many years.[2] With the aid of census tables and actuarial life tables, we estimate that approximately 21,000 women who are living in Pennsylvania to-day began their married lives as child brides within the last 36 years —that is, since the census of 1890.

Moreover, each marriage involves the wel-

[3] Richmond and Hall: *Child Marriages,* p. 28.

[1] Miss Eggleston and Mrs. Keller made their study as graduate students in the Department of Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, working in co-operation with the Child Welfare Division of the Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania.

[2] Cf. Richmond and Hall: *Child Marriages*—page 57.

fare not only of the wife, but of the husband and the children who are born to them. It will be readily seen, therefore, that thousands of people living in the State of Pennsylvania to-day have had their lives vitally affected by the practice of child marriage.

Ages of the Child Brides and Their Husbands

An analysis of the ages of the 521 child brides gave the following results: 441, or 85 per cent, were fifteen years old; 72, or 14 per cent, were fourteen years old; 7 were thirteen years old; and one was only twelve.

A study of the ages of the husbands of these children is even more illuminating. Eight of the grooms were only sixteen years old. Twenty-three were only seventeen. Altogether, 169 or 32 per cent of the grooms were under twenty-one years of age; that is, they were so young that they required parental consent themselves in order to get married!

Most of the grooms, however, were much older than their brides. From the comprehensive tabulation of marriage statistics published by New York State in 1919, it appears that only 31 per cent of all the grooms in that state were more than four years older than their brides. This may be taken as an indication of the "normal" or usual difference in age which is likely to be found in any ordinary group of marriages.

When we turn to the child marriage statistics of Pennsylvania, however, we find that 391 or 75 per cent of the grooms were more than four years older than their child brides. In three cases, the grooms were between fifty-one and fifty-five years old; in other words, they were at least thirty-six years older than the brides.

It is rare, indeed, that we realize our modern ideal of democracy in family life in cases where there are great discrepancies between the ages of the husband and wife. Rather do we tend to revert in such cases to the situation described in that ancient doctrine of the common law which sounds so amazing to modern ears: "A man and his wife are one and he is that one."

One instance illustrative of a child marriage coupled with a marked difference in age is found in the records of the family society in one of the larger cities of Pennsylvania.

> Mrs. A's mother and father were first cousins, and although they lived together for about twenty-two years, were never married. They ran away from home when her mother was thirteen and her father seventeen. There were a number of children, and one of her younger brothers has been diagnosed at the court as high grade feebleminded. About eleven years ago her parents separated, each going off with another person.
>
> Mrs. A at this time lived with a woman friend of the family. When she was thirteen her father arranged a marriage for her with a man who was twenty-five. She has never liked this man and her married life has not been happy because he continually beats her. At one time after a beating she attempted suicide by taking gas, but was taken to the hospital and revived.

Interesting evidence on the subject of happiness in relation to age at marriage is given in a recent study by Hornell Hart and Wilmer Shields.[1] Through a careful analysis of the ages in a large group of Philadelphia marriages and a large number of cases in the Philadelphia Domestic Relations Court, it was concluded "that the ideal age for marriage is about twenty-nine for the groom and twenty-four for the bride . . . that marriages in which the bride is under twenty-one years of age or the groom under twenty-four become rapidly more dangerous as younger ages are considered; that marriages in which either party is nineteen or younger are from 10 to 100 times as risky as are marriages at the ideal age."

Child Marriages and the Foreign-Born

The study made by the Child Welfare Division makes clear that Pennsylvania's child marriages are by no means primarily a foreign problem. Of the 507 child brides whose nativity was reported, 462 or 91 per cent were born in the United States. To be sure, this includes colored as well as white (the statistics as to color were not available in the particular state records which were used) and it includes, also, girls who were native born of foreign and mixed parentage.[2] Nevertheless, the fact remains that only 45 of the 507 child brides were foreign-born. Of these 45, 34 were Italian.

[1] Hart, Hornell, and Shields, Wilmer: "Happiness in Relation to Age at Marriage," *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Vol. XII, No. 7, October 1926.

[2] Richmond and Hall show, however, that "the foreign habit of early marriage does not persist after the first generation." *Child Marriages*, p. 37.

An analysis of the geographical distribution of all the child marriages indicates that while the largest *numbers* of these marriages are found, of course, in the larger cities, yet the highest *percentages* of child marriages are found in the rural counties. In Pennsylvania, as elsewhere, child marriages are primarily a rural problem.

Not all child marriages turn out unhappily, of course. Yet all too frequently does one find instances where child marriage is bound up with feeblemindedness, delinquency, exploitation of children, or other grave social situations. Consider, for example, the following evidence:

At the age of fourteen, a girl brought before the juvenile court on a charge of disorderly conduct was found to be married to a man twenty-seven. Mental examination revealed that she rated as having a nine-year-old intelligence. Because of her pronounced immoral tendencies she was considered a menace to the community. It was the judgment of the court that she be sent to the village for feebleminded women but her husband and her mother asked that she be given another chance, so she was placed on probation. She continued, however, her immoral practices and the following year was committed to an industrial school. Some time after this her husband was arrested for driving an automobile while drunk, and sentenced to sixty days in jail and a fine of $100.

Among the court records of divorces there appeared many in which the parties had been married at very early ages. An illustration of these cases is that of Mrs. X, who at the age of twenty-four had been married ten years. It was reported that on account of the desertion of her husband she was required to leave her children, aged eight and five, in the care of her mother and go out to work.[1]

Applying Prevention

As a result of its studies, the Child Welfare Division, acting in concert with citizens and social agencies throughout the state, will sponsor a Child Marriage Bill at the Session of the Pennsylvania Legislature beginning in January, 1927. This bill will fix the minimum marriageable age at not less than sixteen for both sexes. The juvenile court will have the power to waive the age provision in those exceptional cases where the court may consider it necessary or proper.

There is no reason for supposing that the conditions in regard to child marriages are any worse in Pennsylvania than in other states. It is at least true, however, that Pennsylvania does now have the facts about this problem within its borders. These facts constitute a real social challenge to citizens and welfare organizations. When they have been laid before the people of the state and their representatives in the General Assembly, there can be little doubt that Pennsylvania will reassert her historic concern for child protection and will adopt the policy of safeguarding child life and future homes through prohibiting the marriages of immature children.

THE PICTURE BEHIND THE RECORD[2]

MABEL HAZELTON

Acting Secretary, Providence Family Welfare Society

MOST of us who are writing or reading case histories agree we do not like them but we are not agreed on the reasons why. The schools say they give little time to the teaching of record writing as family welfare societies generally prefer to use their own methods and the specialized agencies their particular forms.

During the past month I have read many records from our own agencies and some from outside our field and we do not seem to be as far apart as many imagine—especially now that the specialized agencies are considering their problems from the all round point of view. There certainly are fundamental bases upon which we agree. Perhaps the time has come when there can be developed certain processes upon which all agencies might build and which, if taught by the schools, would be of great help to our societies. The average agency has neither the time nor the money to give a great deal of attention to teaching record writing; the worker is thrown into it and consequently case histories are often incoherent.

[1] Deardorff, Neva R.: *Child Welfare Conditions and Resources in Seven Pennsylvania Counties.* U. S. Children's Bureau: in process of publication.

[2] Given at the New England Family Welfare Conference, Springfield, Mass., October 13, 1926.

A common basis of all records is the art of writing—to which little attention is paid. Clark, in his *Manual of the Short Story Art*,[3] says that "a writer is a person who loves to use his eyes and ears, who takes delight in ravelling and unravelling plots, who is full to overflowing with warm living interests, desires and aspirations, which, taken together, constitute a great driving force." And Jack London has said that there are two necessary essentials for a writer: The ability to work hard, and a philosophy of life.

Record writing, although not story writing per se, has many points in common with it. A case worker must use her eyes; she must have warm living interests, the ability to work hard, and a philosophy of life; but in addition she must have the vision of the possibilities for growth in mankind. This is her great driving force.

Most of the world's great writers confess that they learned to write through imitation and study of some great forerunner. We have no desire that case workers become famous authors; but by following in their footsteps they can increase their understanding of life and express themselves more competently.

One of the first steps in the art of writing is learning to see the beauty in compactness and unity. As Clark says, we should train ourselves to dislike slovenly expression as we dislike slovenly appearance. Yet how few records do we find clear and compact. Instead, we read entry after entry like the following: "D. S. called on Mrs. F. Was not home but Alice said she was at a neighbor's and would get her which she did. O. P. worker called at the same time. Said that her husband was never at home, that he went off early in the morning and she did not see him until evening, and that he never talked with her much anyway." If the writer had had any conception of the beauty of unity, she certainly would not have written such an entry.

Again, the protoplasm of all writing is the picture. A picture, as we all know, if it is to conform to the best in art, must have a central figure to which everything else is subordinated. What are our records but a series of pictures strung together to make a more complete picture; yet how rarely does our central figure stand out clearly.

If we expect to obtain from our histories the processes in which the changes in character are effected, we must give an increasing amount of attention to the technique of writing and the clarification of the material at hand. It may seem impossible and a foolish expenditure of time for a busy worker to stop and consider such things as the construction, the brevity, and grammatical content of her sentences, even her manner of paragraphing; yet these are the means through which we shall release the processes about which we talk so much.

In our anxiety to interpret these processes there is great danger of verbosity. I have not asked Miss Hardwick's permission, but I should like to quote from a letter of hers: "I have few convictions about records, excepting that they should be brief and exact, and that everyone should as soon as possible have a diagnostic summary such as have the Healy records."

A very interesting history of a foreign family is 107 pages long (not including letters and other data—volumes in themselves). This record has the processes clearly defined and, after reading it, you feel intimately acquainted with the family. Yet the record is cumbersome and unnecessarily long. A whole page, for instance, is devoted to entries on health of an individual when one-fifth of the page would give all the needed information. In the worker's anxiety to have the social problems and the way they were met adequately expressed, she dictated the same material more than once. She often forgot her central picture, making long entries like the following—interesting to be sure but which could have been deleted to advantage, saving the time of the worker, stenographer and reader.

Visitor goes with Mrs. L to the state hospital for crippled children to see Vito. Mrs. L looks nice in a serge dress and her mother's coat. Her hair is prettily curled, and visitor gives her a hat to wear. Vito is in the new section of the hospital in a ward with eleven other boys. He recognizes his mother and speaks English to her, as he does not remember Italian. He looks white and frail, and is in a cast. Says that sometimes he cannot sleep at night on account of the pain. The night nurse brings him little gifts, and he is fond

[3] Macmillan, 1922.

of her. One night he had a piece of a cookie with frosting in the middle and he says that some day he would like a whole cookie. Mrs. L gives Vito a new handkerchief and a mirror so that he can see himself. Vito says that for Christmas he would like a fire engine, some soldiers and a cannon. He has several little toys which he keeps in a bag tied to his bed.

Visitor talks with doctor who says he frequently talks with Mr. L about Vito's condition. The tuberculosis has spread to his intestines. When Mrs. L and visitor leave, Vito seems tired. Mrs. L sat by his bed about two hours and seemed to love to look at him. Jack Brown from Linton is in the next bed to Vito. Mrs. L is motherly toward him, making a paper pocket-book and drawing pictures for him. When she leaves, she kisses Jack.

In contrast is the following excerpt, nearly all of which is pertinent to the building of the complete picture. The man in question had been a deserter and chronic drunkard; the worker was just getting hold of the situation and this was the first interview with the man after getting him back from a distant city.

Found man at home. Woman said he is now working only forty hours a week and earns but $25.50. It was Saturday morning and the house was upset—man had been blacking the stove. He still helps about the house. Couple said that it takes from 5 o'clock to 9 Saturdays to bathe the children and get them put to bed. Mr. G had gone into bedroom and closed the door when visitor knocked and his wife had to urge him to come out. After some persuasion he stood against the door jamb the further side of the room and in a sheepish and at the same time belligerent manner said he has not reformed, that it was his wife who had reformed and he considered it due to the efforts of the Family Welfare Society. He was plainly ready to fight but was induced to talk about an invention which he hopes to perfect; applying some part of a turbine engine to a rotary engine. He worked at the Green Engine Company and later for the Bowden Engine Company, so knows about this business. He became enthusiastic and forgot that he was on guard against visitor. Said that he liked his job at Ardsville where he works on special machinery used by the firm in making their own tools. Asked visitor if she could learn for him the address of the American Engineering and Developing Association, New York.

Man works with cardboard and pins to develop his model and the children come in noisily and disturb him. This makes him cross and the woman tells him he is crazy, so trouble begins. Mr. G said that Mrs. G does not make the children obey when she speaks to them, that she permits them to argue; the result is they get their own way. They also disagree over Walter and John. Walter does not care to have John go about with him. Woman thinks they should go together but man said they will never be good pals as John has a clerical mind and Walter is all for mechanics. Woman felt that Mr. G favors Walter. Suddenly the man apologized for his rude behavior and said he appreciated all that had been done for family and that he thought it was wonderful. Said that he didn't want to face the visitor; that he never wanted to go off and leave family again. If things were so that he could not stand them, he was coming to the F.W.S. with his troubles as he felt he had as good a right to do it as his wife.

Most family agencies use the chronological form of recording. For the study of the first interview and the processes involved, the chronological is probably needed, but it may be that, for general use, the topical first investigation such as Mrs. Sheffield speaks of in her *Social Case History*[1] will make for greater efficiency, and it may also be a means of standardization for the average society. The worker is forced to analyze her findings and consequently there is a sifting process. We get almost immediately a clearer picture of the social problems involved and it seems as if we obviated by this process a great deal of beating about the bush. It does not tend to the story form and consequently is not as interesting, but we can make it alive even with analysis.

It seems to me, too, that it is only the richer and larger organizations and the exceptional workers who now write case histories for study and research.

With the coming of the Community Chest and the increasing scrutiny of our work, we shall have to meet the question of efficiency in record writing as in case work. Mrs. Sheffield says the test of the value of recorded material is: "Does it help to further the understanding of the problem?" More and more we shall have to apply this acid test to our records.

[1] Russell Sage Foundation, New York.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE IN MILWAUKEE

MARIE DRESDEN

Superintendent, Lincoln District, Milwaukee Family Welfare Association

LINCOLN is a new district formed from parts of the territory of two old city districts. It is a compact area running from the downtown business section of the city straight north to the city limits and is very easy for volunteers to reach because of its proximity to clubs and other downtown activities. The population in this territory includes in nearly equal proportions the following groups: negroes, Slavs (both Czech and Jugo), Poles, Germans, and an American rooming house population. When the district office opened, a new advisory committee, meeting once a week in the district office, was formed immediately and one of the members came over from an old committee to serve as vice-chairman. She had had a good deal of experience with volunteers, in fact, had been chairman of volunteers for the entire organization a few years before. The plans for development and use of volunteers in the district were worked out by her and the district secretary through weekly conferences.

The plan is simple: The district secretary keeps from day to day, as the problems arise, a list of the tasks suitable and, by their very nature, calling for volunteers, and goes over them in detail with the vice-chairman. She, in turn, considers the capabilities and possibilities of people she knows or has met in her wide range of civic and social activities, in their relationship to the particular task or need, and provides the volunteer. It is understood that she will assist in making any adjustment should the person selected for the task prove unable to continue or unable to do that particular thing sufficiently well.

Very little actual recruiting has been done by the staff itself. However, as collateral and community contact calls have been made in the course of the daily work, the visitors have made a memorandum, in the district file, of those persons whose interest or usefulness can sometimes be of value to the district. Then as special need for some service arises, the visitor who made the initial contact or the district secretary calls upon and interests that person. This has been particularly fruitful in several instances in the negro and Slavic neighborhoods and has given us some truly professional and valuable helps—a friendly visitor, several real estate agents, many interpreters. Then, too, several of the volunteers have enlisted the interests of their friends and some new volunteer visitors, money for special Christmas funds, and car service have resulted.

As a rule, at the time of recruiting, the vice-chairman talks with the volunteer about the necessity of regularity and reliability in doing the particular task which is not so much assigned to as assumed by her. Then, when she comes to the district office, she talks with the district secretary. There is a properly equipped desk used only by volunteers. Each volunteer keeps a monthly report, noting the types of services and number of hours given; this, together with any necessary dictation, must be at the district office the first of each month for the monthly reports. Each volunteer understands, before beginning her work, that she is entirely responsible for its completion and the work cannot be done unless she herself does it or provides a substitute if she is ill or away.

The district secretary supervises some of the volunteers, the various visitors the others, so that each member of the staff has some responsibility in the district volunteer program. After talking with the district secretary the new volunteer meets, and thereafter confers with (except for an occasional emergency when she cannot locate her), the visitor with whom she is to work. Sometimes this is the visitor who has carried the family as a part of her load, or taken the first interview, sometimes another worker. All plans in regard to conferences, dictation, and such routine matters are arranged in whatever way that particular volunteer and visitor prefer. The district secretary reads the records and makes suggestions in regard to those families just as in any other situations active in the district.

It is hoped (and everything is aimed to that end) that each volunteer will feel herself a part of the district office: she knows

each member of the district staff, she has a standing invitation to attend and express her opinion at advisory committee meetings, she is kept informed as to all meetings, conferences, and public speeches the staff may be interested in and in all special district projects such as Thanksgiving and Christmas plans; she is urged to study records other than her own and to visit unusual and interesting places within the district boundaries as well as other agencies—especially those like the Children's Hospital—affiliated with the Community Fund.

Four of the volunteers came to the district office to do clerical work, and two of these became so interested, after reading several records at the suggestion of the district secretary and talking with her about budgets and pay day planning with the families, that they are now doing visiting instead of clerical work. Nevertheless, they understand the details of making budgets and the financial sheets and reports for the office and are willing to help out with these if it is necessary. Their interest in case work is worth noting; they enjoy it so much more than the clerical work, although when they first came to the office they were sure they were unable to do anything except routine clerical tasks. At the present time the work of the group of volunteers who give continuous service includes case work, friendly visiting, general automobile service, automobile service in conjunction with health problems in certain families (such as taking a partially blind man to the dispensary every day for a period of months), and clerical work.

In the case work, the volunteer is treated like a visitor in training, except that she does not take the first interview. She does, however, step by step, under supervision, and with the help natural in such instances, do whatever investigation and treatment are required.

In the matter of special services—those given by professional persons (physicians, lawyers, real estate agents, former professional case workers or staff members now married and no longer working who can give automobile service as a part of a treatment process, or interpret)—the visitor responsible for that situation has the volunteer read the record if it is possible or feasible; if not, she discusses it at length with the volunteer and urges him to come to the district office to confer.

The volunteer work has been much appreciated by the district for several reasons. First, the actual bulk of work done has relieved the entire office in many ways; second, the trained workers have enjoyed the contact and stimulation which the volunteers—women with varied and broad interests and connections in the city—have brought to the office and to the individual workers with whom they have had weekly contacts for some eight or nine months. The social contacts and friendly relationships established in several instances between the visitor and her volunteer have been pleasing and are valued by both; visitors have been introduced to community activities, club meetings, conferences and so on, with which they would probably never have come into contact otherwise; and these volunteers have taken to their friends, out through the community, in a way in which no trained worker can ever do, a message as to the scope and value of family case work.

The following quotations show the actual case work of volunteers:

The S Family

The S family income is not large enough for the family and there is a growing breach between the parents and the oldest daughter. Mrs. S is in very poor health.

4/26/26 Took old things to Mrs. S from which she could make things for the children. Visitor found Mrs. S quite discouraged. Said her limbs were swollen and painful and that she didn't feel well. She talked freely about family affairs; said Verona was headstrong and disrespectful and unwilling to help with the housework as much as she might.

Visitor advised Mrs. S to see a physician and if he thought best for her to have a complete rest to go to a place where she could do so, and have Verona stay home to keep house for a couple of weeks. Mrs. S didn't think she could do this. Visitor promised to return at later date and have talk with Verona.

5/1/26 Went to see Verona and took her driving in car so as to be able to talk freely. Verona seemed to feel that she didn't have freedom enough and that her father was too strict with her. Visitor tried to impress upon her the necessity of aiding her mother as much as possible and also of yielding to her mother's wishes and

of realizing that her mother had better judgment than she; that while her parents might seem over strict they were vitally interested in her and had her interests at heart. Visitor couldn't tell whether the talk was of value but thought it influenced Verona somewhat and visitor promised to see Mr. S and talk with him and give him Verona's viewpoint, as she said she couldn't.

5/2/26 Went to S home and invited Mr. S to take a drive. He seems to be a very sensible man and to understand Verona quite well. He complained of Verona being out too much and staying too late. He said he believed she didn't do anything wrong when she went out. She went to the movies with a girl chum but he felt she wasn't fit to work in the morning after being out until 11:00 P.M. Verona had said her father expected her to retire about 9:00 when at home. Visitor told Mr. S that he mustn't be too strict with the daughter, that if she stayed home to allow her to read until 10:00 or 10:30. Visitor agreed with father that two evenings a week were enough for movies. Mr. S said he would try to have his wife see a physician and follow his advice. Visitor promised to return during the week to learn the decision.

5/18/26 Presented case to Advisory Committee. Decision: Urge both Mr. S and Verona to get different work; move the family into better environment, if necessary F.W.A. paying moving expenses and one month's rent; get Mrs. S and five younger children into Salvation Army camp for ten days rest as early this summer as possible; see that Carol joins the Girl Scouts and impress upon Mrs. S to treat Carol differently than she did Verona and avoid another similar situation.

5/20/26 Visited in evening. Jane and Carol in the kitchen doing the supper dishes, Mrs. S sitting on the bed in the living room holding the baby. Mrs. S said both Mr. S and Verona were out. When visitor casually asked if Mr. S might have gone to a movie for the evening, Mrs. S said Mr. S did not care for movies at all and never went. However, Mrs. S did not say where she thought Mr. S might be. Verona out with girl friend.

Mrs. S said she was not able to return to the dispensary for laboratory tests to be made, but hoped to be able to go first of next week. Mrs. S said it was very difficult for her to go alone as she often had dizzy spells and became so very weak that she could scarcely stand alone. Thought it not safe to go any place alone on street. Visitor said she would be glad to take Mrs. S to dispensary in her car if Mrs. S would telephone her early in the morning that she wished to go. Mrs. S thanked visitor and promised to telephone her Monday or Tuesday morning of the next week. As call had been made in hope of talking to Mr. S and Mrs. S together, re the possibilities of the family moving and also to Mr. S re his present employment, visitor visited with Mrs. S a short while and then left.

The N Family

The parents speak only German, and the volunteer's knowledge of that language was of great assistance to us. One child, Charley, in a state institution for the feebleminded. The income is very small and the family has great difficulty managing because of the large family and illness.

2/9/26 Visited to tell Mrs. N about the extra milk that was to be given them, impressing upon her the idea that she was not to cease having the amount they already used but was to have two quarts added a day for one month, that the children were all to be weighed at the beginning of that time and at end as F.W.A. was particularly anxious to see just what that amount of extra milk would do for them. Took them three musical toys that had been given visitor, one especially for Fritzi, who has no toys at all, but who can play tunes on the melodeon.

2/13/26 Anna and Lydia came to visitor's home for lunch and spent afternoon sewing. A dress for the baby was made, almost finished, and a dress for Anna's doll.

2/20/26 Anna came to call and talked about Charley. They have very satisfactory letters concerning Charley from a girl or young woman called Henrietta who seems to be very fond of the child and feels friendly to the family. The N's send her stamps and stationery. Anna has named her new doll Henrietta in appreciation. Anna and visitor made doll clothes. Anna is looking better than before, has a slight indication of color, where she had been only grayish before. 2/15/26 the children weighed (school scales) Lydia 98; Frieda 95; David 72; Anna 58; Freddie 42. Visitor tried to explain to Anna same as her mother two weeks before that it was like a game, and that F.W.A. wanted to find out just what the milk would do for them, and F.W.A. really needed that kind of information in order to be able to tell other families how much milk they needed, etc. Each child now has a glass of milk at night and in the morning, on the odd days when they have five glasses, they

have one at noon also. All like it except one of the twins, but she drinks it too because she wants to have red cheeks same as the others. They did not weigh the baby because she is not in the school.

Conference with district secretary.

2/22/26 Anna and David, because it was a school holiday, came over in the morning with their skates. They went to Lake Park to skate and returned for lunch, both looking quite rosy. David more lively and full of pep than ever before. Visitor had been given some skis at Christmas time, but withheld them thinking there was no opportunity to use them near the children's home, and they would be nothing but an aggravation. David said there were many children in the park on skis, so visitor gave them to him. He tried them in the back yard, and finding he could handle them visitor said he could keep them. He was off with a leap and a shout, "O boy!"—the roughest, toughest thing he has ever said, and all due, thinks visitor, to the extra milk they are getting. He will be able to use them in Franklin Square and in their empty lot also. Advised David that salve selling is not advisable and requires street trades permit. Better for him to double paper route if has time and energy.

3/29/26 Visited Pastor Dietz by appointment, in order to get his co-operation in regard to family removing child from institution. Pastor Dietz has same point of view as F.W.A. Asked visitor to suggest N's coming to talk it over with him. He would tell them it was their duty toward the other children to leave Charley where he was. Said not to mention that visitor has been to see him. He mentioned in course of conversation that their church had a home for feeble-minded.

From the pastor's house visitor went immediately to N's and talked to Mrs. N privately. Mrs. N looking very miserable, having lost sleep and otherwise agonized over the problem. Visitor told her that papers had to go through hands of court and not possible to get information before Monday or Tuesday. Also spoke very earnestly about the dangerous side of having the child home, that doctor strongly disapproves of Charley's removal, and that he would be sure to retrograde away from institution. Also told her about project of keeping the children on farm through summer and why not postpone till fall anyway. Mrs. N said it was nice here in summer too. Visitor said why not both Mr. and Mrs. N go to see their pastor and talk it over with him once more. Mrs. N said she knew he would advise leaving Charley at institution, but that was not according to Holy Writ—Holy Writ saying you must bear the burdens sent you. Tried to make her see that the nature of their burden was that they could not take care of the child themselves, but did not convince her in any way. However, she said she would speak to her husband again about it, in the meantime visitor was to go right on and do what she could to get the papers. Spoke of effect on other children especially as Charley was growing older.

People who live above them are very noisy, having company and music till the small hours of the morning often, and keeping them all awake—another reason, visitor said, for not having Charley home till the question of moving was settled.

David gained three pounds in the month of extra milk, Lydia and Anna each gained one pound. Frederick's weight was the same, and Frieda had lost five pounds. Her mother said she had been so miserable with the facial pains that she had lost sleep and eaten poorly. The dentist said she had a bad catarrhal condition due to adenoids. Mrs. N said if there were some way of her being taken care of she would like that done soon, *i.e.*, removal of adenoids.

Anna embroidered a pillow slip for visitor which her sisters had given her for a Christmas present. The children, except Frieda, seem happy and well. David particularly shows great improvement. He has bought a bicycle on time, using it for his paper route. He has also bought an additional route, having twice as far to go now as before.

Children all having baths in tub in kitchen and clean clothes Saturday P.M.

4/4/26 Called for Frieda by appointment to take her to dispensary, because facial pains and nose breathing bad. Frieda had had several treatments by dentist for whom her mother does office cleaning, mother paying for same in work. Baby not well, troubled by teething.

At dispensary Frieda was given medical examination and nose, ear and throat examination, the latter very thorough. He thinks there is an infection in left antrum, sent her to X-ray man in hospital, who took three head photographs. Examination showed her to be considerably under weight, also showed great loss of weight in last two months if scales used before (3/15/26 and 4/15/26) were true. Frieda told to return next Saturday. Visitor will try to arrange to accompany her. Examinations took from 9:00 till 11:45. Frieda troubled

because she lost opportunity of taking care of neighbor's children. Visitor tried to convince her that thorough examination was more important now. Visitor saw Mrs. N only for a moment, and there was no time to discuss problem of getting Charley home.

5/1/26 Went to dispensary with Frieda for second visit. Medical examination had been negative. Doctor re-examined nose, prescribed drops and explained method of using them, asked her to return following Saturday. Frieda was charged 30 cents for medicine and dropper, which her mother paid. Frieda still much troubled by a bad tooth. The dentist for whom her mother works said it was abscessed, and he would try a little longer to cure it by treatments, but most likely would have to pull it. Frieda losing sleep and appetite.

After all, it is not the salary that makes the case worker. Volunteers who have professional training do not differ from the paid staff worker in the quality of the work they do and there should be the same attitude in training them as in training new workers. Most important is that everybody in the district realizes the value of volunteers; in such an atmosphere their work is of as high a standard as that of the other staff workers.

BUDGETS FOR DEPENDENT FAMILIES[1]

ADA M. BARKER

General Secretary, Rock Island (Illinois) Welfare Association

WHEN I consented to prepare a report on budgets for dependent families, it was not with the feeling that I could contribute anything new to the subject; rather that, by bringing the subject before the Council again, a discussion might be opened clarifying some of the daily and practical problems inherent in budget using; a selfish reason—to get help rather than to give it.

The report aims to direct our thought to the use and value of budgets in dependent families and not to the process of budget making or the computation of how much or how little a family should have. This phase of budget study has been set forth in reports prepared by committees directed by dietitians and other specialists in household economics. I have found the three following studies particularly helpful: *The Chicago Standard Budget for Dependent Families,*[2] *Good Nutrition and Adequate Food Allowances for Families,* prepared by the Committee on Economic Standards of the New York Nutrition Council,[3] and *The Suggestive Budget for Families of Small Income* by the Associated Charities of Cleveland.

I believe it is the custom, generally, for those of us in the smaller societies to base our estimates upon the figures of some large city society. While these more scientific studies are indispensable as a check on our own work, there is real value in making a local computation. This is of value to us as social workers by compelling us to face the study of food values, clothing costs, rental standards, and so on, in our own community. It is a means of interesting the community in our work, both through the assisting committee and the dealers and families called upon to give price lists and estimates. It means much to our families to know that we have made a study of local conditions and realize whereof we speak in discussing prices. A study made once in three or four years may be checked biannually with current studies made elsewhere and by the rise and fall in prices indicated in state bulletins or other such statistics.

A simple method for calculating food estimates may be developed from the bulletin previously mentioned, *Good Nutrition and Adequate Food Allowances for Families.* This bulletin contains a food list for collecting food prices, a statement of the calories required in the weekly diet of adults and children of different ages, and the type and quantity of food containing the calories. Having secured the food prices on the types of food, these prices can then be reduced to weekly estimates for adults and children of different ages. Along with the advantages already mentioned it gives a

[1] Given at the Illinois Family Workers' Council, Aurora, March, 1926.

[2] Chicago Council of Social Agencies, 308 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.

[3] 105 East 22d Street, New York, N. Y.

worker considerable personal satisfaction to have acquainted herself with the facts gathered from such a study.

Let us assume then that we have accepted a standard budget for our families, one which furnishes "everything necessary for a manner of living that will make possible a high standard of physical, mental, and moral health and efficiency for adults, the full physical and mental growth and development of children, and provision for their moral welfare."[4] How shall we then use the budget in the two types of relief giving—emergency and planned?

(1) *Emergency Relief:* I must confess that here I use an estimate too little. Emergency relief as well as planned should be adequate and more or less regularly given, at least until a plan for the family is made. To make it such, we must fall back on our standard estimate. Perhaps if we held ourselves more rigidly to this estimate in giving emergency relief, it would speed up our investigation and plan-making by bringing the family's problem more clearly and forcibly to us. For the conservation of our society's funds, if for no other reason, we should ferret out all available resources and make a plan.

(2) *Planned Relief:* Here we can assume the need of a budget. In every case the relief sheet will contain an estimate of family expenditures based on our standard budget with such alterations as the family's circumstances warrant. The problem is how to put this budget into practical use and make it a tool in the rehabilitation of the family. It seems to me the problem increases in direct ratio to the uncertainty of income. In families where the wage earner is unemployed or irregularly employed, the budget seems less attractive to the housewife and certainly less useful to the case worker. But, if patience and persistence win, the use of a budget may help the wage earner and his wife to appreciate a steady income.

Where the wage earner is incapacitated, out of the home because of desertion or death, or the earnings are insufficient, the task is not so difficult. An estimate can be made—a goal planned toward which to work. By beginning with simple account keeping, one can work with the housewife toward budget planning. At first she can be asked to recall her expenditures for the preceding week. Usually she does not know what they were, for groceries were bought as needed, for cash; or she will have to wait for her bills to be paid at the end of the week with no after study of items. Perhaps only a very rough estimate can be made for the following week, at the end of which the grocery bills may be saved or a bit closer attention given to items purchased. It may surprise the mother to know that her grocery bill shows that she bought potatoes four times in one week or that John had three lead pencils and two tablets. Then she may be willing to set down the items for the visitor the coming week or delegate the day's account-keeping to an older boy or girl in the family. Finally the day will come when you can present the bookkeeper with a real account book. A few more weeks and there will be sufficient data on which to ask him (or, more likely, her) to make a budget. And finally, the time will come when you can openly check this budget with your standard estimate. It is my common experience that the budget made by the family runs lower than the standard budget. The skimping comes on milk and vegetables and the surplus is used on insurance, credit payments and rent, always out of proportion to income and other living costs. It is difficult for our mothers to see that more food for the money and not less money for food is usually our aim.

In the type of families last mentioned, though there is always a deficit, it is constant and a form of supplement which seems most constructive to the family can be adopted. With us this supplement is often milk, and it is frequently given to make possible the payment of a doctor's or dentist's bill. It is almost never rent, a bill which a family usually takes seriously. If this is once assumed by a society, it is most difficult to discontinue.

In putting the budget to practical use, there are other difficulties to consider. The family must not feel that the purpose of the budget is to detect imposition or spy on unwise expenditures. Figures will not lie and if once a family can see its income and expenditures in these terms, they will preach

[4] Nesbitt: *The Chicago Standard Budget for Dependent Families*, p. 4.